

view of U.S. 4,888,094 (Weissshuhn et al.) and/or U.S. 5,549,793 (Hellstrom et al.) and U.S. 4,956,050 (Makela).


Claim 14 now recites that the first wedge zone, formed by the first top wire and the bottom wire, is pressure loaded at the outlet end. In a fiberboard making device having such a wedge, "the maximum dry content can be obtained after pre-dewatering, regardless of the board thickness to be produced and thus, the web undergoes optimum preparation for the subsequent press zone." (Page 6, lines 8-13) With the pressure loading of the present invention, the gap width is allowed to vary so as to maintain a substantially constant pressure. The constant pressure at the outlet end of the wedge zone produces a consistently dry output product in spite of fluctuations in the consistency and ratio of pulp-to-water of the slurry introduced into the wedge. While the width of the gap in the wedge zone of the Upson device is adjustable (page 1, lines 91-98), the screw (7) utilized to adjust the gap provides a fixed gap width at any specific point of adjustment, which will in turn produce a variable pressure depending on the consistency of the pulp slurry. Thomas '676 similarly discloses a wedge zone having an outlet end where the gap may be adjusted (Col. 2, lines 41-45; Col. 4, lines 50-53) to provide a fixed gap width at any specific point of adjustment. The Csordas reference also discloses a wedge zone having an outlet end where the gap may be adjusted (Col. 2, lines 37-50) to provide a fixed gap width at any specific point of adjustment. None of the references teach or suggest the wedge zone having a pressure loaded outlet end recited in claim 14. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 14 should be withdrawn.

The various dependent claims add additional features to the independent claims, and are therefore believed to be allowable. Also, the dependent claims are believed patentably distinct on their own merits as being directed to combinations not suggested by the references. For example, claim 21 now recites that the outlet end of the second wedge zone is pressure loaded. As shown above, none of the cited references teach or suggest a pressure loaded wedge zone.

In view of the above-directed amendments and the proceeding remarks, prompt and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

**In the claims:**

Claims 14, 16, 18 and 21 have been amended as follows:

14. Device for forming wood fiber board from a wood fiber stock suspension has a basic weight of 1200 to 8000 g/m<sup>2</sup>, the device comprising a first headbox and a main dewatering zone having a first top wire or felt and a bottom wire or felt, the first top wire and the bottom wire forming a first wedge zone having an inlet end and an outlet end, the first wedge zone being pressure loaded at the outlet end.

16. Device according to Claim [15] 14 wherein the first wedge zone is adjustable.

18. Device according to Claim [15] 14 further comprising support means for supporting the wire or felt in the first wedge zone said support means comprising perforated plastic, steel plates, foil strips or table rolls.

21. Device according to Claim 20 wherein the [wedge zones are suitable for pressure loading at an end] second wedge zone has an inlet end and an outlet end, the second wedge zone being pressure loaded at the outlet end.